Model breakdown

Auction Averages

	January To Date	December	November
1983			
1982	$7,751	$6,811	$6,961
1981	5,718	6,157	6,141
1980	4,959	4,811	4,904
1979	4,289	4,148	4,479
1978	3,277	3,125	3,424
1977	2,747	2,649	2,822
1976	1,670	2,021	2,001
OVERALL Average	$4,586	$4,505	$4,569

factories list auction dates

American Motors

Jan. 19 — Central States Auto Auction, 824 S. Taft, Mason City, Ia.; Kansas City Automobile Auction, 1100 Elmwood Ave., Kansas City, Mo.; Southern Auto Sales, S. Main St., Rte. 5, Warehouse Point, Conn.; Sand Mountain Auto Auction, U. S. 431, Boaz, Ala.; Columbus Fair Auction, 4700 Groveport Rd., Obetz, O.

Jan. 20 — Minneapolis Northstar Auto Auction, 7701 Hwy. 101, Shakopee, Minn.; Fredericksburg Auto Auction, U. S. 1 Alt., Fredericksburg, Va.

Jan. 21—Concord Auto Auction, Hosmer St., Acton, Mass.; Floyd Hauhe Auto Auction, 12000 St. Charles Rock Rd., Bridgeton, Mo.

Jan. 25—Aptco Auto Auction, 20911 Gladwin, Taylor, Mich.; D-A Auto Auction, Waltz Mill Rd., New Stanton, Pa.

Ford Motor Co.

Jan. 18—Dallas Auto Auction, 4226 E. Main, Dallas; Aptco Auto Auction, 20911 Gladwin, Taylor, Mich.

Jan. 19 — Minneapolis Northstar Auto Auction, 7700 State Hwy. 101, Shakopee, Minn.; Golden Gate Auto Auction, 6010 Stevenson Blvd., Fremont, Calif.

Used car sales

Auction Averages

January to date	$4,585
Month ago	$4,560
Year ago	$5,028

used-car auction directory

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OHIO

Ohio Auto Auction. The Tuesday sale. 3905 Jackson Pike, Columbus, Ohio. 614-871-2771.

Bricklin to distribute Spider and X 1/9

Fiat plans to withdraw from U. S.

Continued from Page 1

distribution in the U. S. was put in the charge of Vincent Garibaldi, an able Fiat veteran executive, and the entire range of vehicles was offered to American buyers.

At that time, Garibaldi said his aim was "never to grow large enough to be noticed by General Motors."

As it turned out, Garibaldi had nothing to worry about. Fiat got into market difficulty, sales nosedived and in a reorganization of its distribution system in the early 1960s, Fiat-Roosevelt Motors was formed with Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr.

In 1971, Fiat S.p.A. bought out Fiat-Roosevelt and changed the name to Fiat Distributors, Inc. In 1976, this was reformed as Fiat Motors of North America.

Some optimistic sales targets were established—targets which the company was never able to reach. One of those goals was 200,000 sales in 1980. Later the 1980 goal was revised to 130,000. Fiat actually sold some 59,000 in the U. S. that year.

Although Fiat officials in the past put its potential as high as 300,000 a year, Fiat's best year in the U. S. was 1975, when registrations reached 110,511. No other year has seen Fiat's U. S. sales top 70,000.

In 1982, Fiat's U. S. sales shrank to 14,113, the lowest total recorded in 15 years and in December the tally was a minuscule 573.

• Fiat's efforts to market Lancia in the U. S. in the late 1970s was less than successful and Ferrari never formed a major piece of business. Ferrari sales will remain in the hands of Fiat in the U. S.

Fiat had scaled back its U. S. operations quite drastically in recent years.

Currently, it occupies modest headquarters in Hasbrouck Heights, N. J.

Relations between Fiat and its dealers frequently have been strained in recent years. Dealers have been unhappy with warranty fulfillment and anger reached a peak early in 1981 when Fiat Motors of North America sold 4,300 left-over 1980 Stradas and Bravas to a liquidator.

• In a 1978 interview with AUTOMOTIVE NEWS, Fiat Chairman Giovanni Agnelli said there were too many ups and downs in the U. S. market and that the company would be "cautious and conservative" with its U. S. marketing program.

That raised the hackles of Fiat officials in the U. S., who still talked bravely about topping 100,000 a year. In actuality, in no year following Agnelli's remarks was Fiat able to sell as many as 38,000 in the U. S.

And it was Agnelli in that interview who said that 100,000 to 110,000 sales a year is the "minimum size you need to maintain an organization, pay for marketing and provide for service."

Survival of the Spider in the U. S. market would seem essential to the success of the Pininfarina operation.

Pininfarina originally only made bodies for the Spider, but several years ago it took over entire production of the car. The Spider accounts for some 80 percent of Pininfarina's automotive manufacturing business and the U. S., in turn, accounts for about 80 percent of worldwide Spider sales.

Bricklin, known for his success in promotion and sales, most recently has been active in the aftermarket. He formed Thermo-Guard Bricklin, Inc., last summer to market and distribute Thermo-Guard sealants and rustproofing products.

Bricklin got his start in the auto business importing the Subaru 360. He later designed a sleek and sporty car bearing his name and put it into production in New Brunswick, Canada, in 1974. The cars were built by General Vehicle Corp. and marketed in the U. S. by Bricklin Vehicle Corp. A subsidiary of Bricklin Vehicle, Bricklin of Canada, operated the New Brunswick factory.

When the Bricklin enterprise went belly up in 1975, some 2,900 cars had been produced.

NEW CAR STOCKS

	Jan. 1, 1983	Dec. 1, 1982	Jan. 1, 1982
Alliance	61	65	.....
Spirit	99	207	176
Concord	93	76½	92
Eagle	136½	108	67
Eagle SX/4	81	63	86
AMERICAN MTRS.	78	79	97
Horizon	51	66	140
Tourismo/TC3	57	67	127½
Reliant	67	58	86
Gran Fury	115	83	98
Plymouth	60	61	104
LeBaron	70	80	105
Cordoba	73	61	84
New Yorker	57	.....	.....
E Class	63½	75	.....
Fifth Ave.	72	62	55½
Chrysler	69	71	88½
Imperial	53	62	136
Omni	43	61	136½
Charger/024	55	66½	260
Aries	59	72	94
Dodge 400	77	108	169
Dodge 600	57	93	.....
Diplomat	73	50	91
Mirada	126	122	115
Dodge	59½	75	112
CHRYSLER CORP.	62	69	104
Escort	78	63	140
EXP	77	56	207
Mustang	103	87	148
Fairmont	30	36	92
LTD	65	70	.....
Granada	29	33	92
Thunderbird	37	39	114
Crown Victoria	52	56	72
Ford	63	58	117
Lynx	87	72	161
LN7	61	64	148
Capri	84	91	179
Zephyr	37	30	109
Marquis	74	67	.....
Cougar	29	29	71
XR-7	28	30	144
Grand Marquis	64	56	67
Mercury	68	59	114
Lincoln	41	39	47
Continental	56	34	101
Mark VI	46	41	55
Lincoln	44½	39	71½
FORD MOTOR	63	57	113
Skyhawk	101	64	.....
Skylark	91	55½	94
Century	45	34	118
Regal 4-door	68	42	78
Regal 2-door	91	54	97
LeSabre	62	47	61
Electra	70	53	71
Riviera	96	62	82½
Buick	72	49	86
Cimarron	54	60	155
Seville	30	33	72
Cadillac	41	34	116
Eldorado	34	33	44
Cadillac	38	35	54
Chevette	90	41	129
Cavalier	75	54	276
Citation	70	50	110
Camaro	68	38	154
Malibu	66½	43½	71
Celebrity	56	55	263
Monte Carlo	91	55	150
Chevrolet	67	52	91
Corvette	95	80	117
Chevrolet	70½	48	133½
Firenza	102	66	.....
Omega	75	39	112
Ciera	63	39	181
Cutlass 4-door	59	35	70
Cutlass 2-door	70	39	101
Olds 88	44	34	47
Olds 98	54	45½	64
Toronado	68	47½	71
Oldsmobile	59	40	82
1000	78	60½	197½
2000	72	65	279
Phoenix	74	67	145
Firebird	56	52	138
Bonneville	57	42	105
6000	55	55	338
Grand Prix	86½	61	116
Pontiac	63	57	160
GENERAL MTRS.	66	47	107
VOLKSWAGEN	87	67	83
TOTAL	65	52	107

New-car stock dips but supply rises to 65 days

Continued from Page 1

3.65 percent, and VWoA, 1.55 percent.

By size class, the small-car end of the inventory ballooned during December, subcompacts much more than compacts.

The industry had a 73-day supply of subcompacts Jan. 1, up from 59½ days a month earlier, while compacts were in 65-day supply, up from 57 days.

The industry had a 66-day supply of intermediates, up from 49 days a month earlier; a 59-day supply of standards, up from 49½ days, and a 47-day stock of luxury cars, up from 41 days.

The Jan. 1 inventory was divided this way by market segment: Subcompact, 19.62 percent; compact, 24.12 percent; intermediate, 34.65 percent; standard, 15.30 percent, and luxury, 6.31 percent.

The Jan. 1 days-supply figures by market class were:

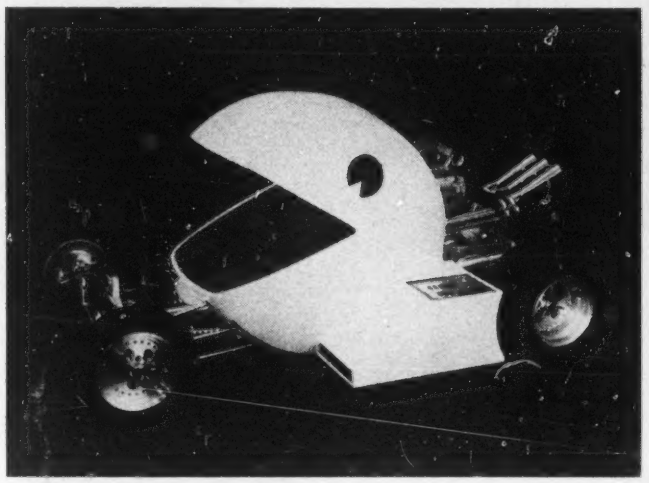
Subcompact—Omni, 43; Horizon, 51; Charger, 55; Turismo, 57; Alliance, 61; LN7, 61; EXP, 77; Escort, 78; Pontiac 1000, 78; Eagle SX/4, 81; Lynx, 87; Rabbit, 87; Chevette, 95, and Spirit, 99.

Compact — Fairmont, 30; Zephyr, 37; Cimarron, 54; Firebird, 56; Aries, 59; Reliant, 67; Camaro, 68; LeBaron, 70; Pontiac 2000, 72; Cavalier, 75; Dodge 400, 77; Capri, 84; Skyhawk, 101; Firenza, 102, and Mustang, 103.

Intermediate—XR-7, 28; Granada, 29; Cougar, 29; Thunderbird, 37; Century, 45; Pontiac 6000, 55; Celebrity, 56; Dodge 600, 57; Bonneville, 57; New Yorker E, 57; Cutlass Supreme four-door, 59; Chrysler E Class, 63; Cutlass Ciera, 63; LTD, 65; Malibu, 66½; Regal four-door, 68; Citation, 70; Cutlass Supreme two-door, 70; Phoenix, 74; Marquis, 74; Omega, 75; Grand Prix, 86½; Skylark, 91; Regal two-door, 91; Monte Carlo, 91; Concord, 93, and Eagle, 136½.

Standard — Olds 88, 44; LTD Crown Victoria, 52; Olds 98, 54; LeSabre, 62; Grand Marquis, 64; Chevrolet, 67; Electra, 70; New Yorker Fifth Avenue, 72; Cordoba, 73; Diplomat, 73; Gran Fury, 115, and Mirada, 126.

Luxury — Seville, 30; Eldorado, 34; Lincoln, 41; Cadillac, 41; Mark VI, 46; Imperial, 53; Continental, 56; Toronado, 68; Corvette, 95, and Riviera, 96.



The Pac Man cometh

This custom car patterned after one of the most popular of the video game heroes is on the show circuit this year. Pac Man Street Rod was first seen at the Detroit Autorama along with some 400 other custom cars, trucks, buggies and boats. The bright yellow rod was built under license from Bally Mfg., owner of Pac Man. It featured hand-formed top panels from a Volkswagen Beetle, fenders from a Peterbilt truck and a gold-plated Buick V-6 engine.

Fiat-NHTSA battle on rust finally nearing completion

WASHINGTON. — The successful government suit against Fiat over excessive rust and corrosion on underbodies of 1970-74 Fiat 124s and 850s finally is winding down a little over two years after it was launched.

In retrospect, the rust problems were so serious—and Fiat delayed correction for so long—that the episode is thought to have very adversely affected the company's image and, subsequently, its sales.

What appears to be the closing chapter in the case is a court order dated Dec. 6, 1982, which says Fiat must have its dealers post notices offering to repurchase vehicles from some 34 owners and to reinspect vehicles belonging to 16 other owners. In addition, the notice warns owners whose addresses are not available they have 60 days to bring in their claims. After that 60-day period, Fiat will have no legal obligation although the federal court says Fiat should still exercise discretion to provide dealer inspection and advice "without free remedy" to owners asking for help.

Then Fiat is to notify and certify to NHTSA that it has fulfilled its part of the modified consent settlement, ending the 1980 suit.

Thus within a few weeks will end a hard-fought battle between the government and the huge Italian company. It was January 16, 1979, that NHTSA told Fiat it had made an initial finding of a safety-related defect because the rust problem was so serious that it affected structural and steering components.

Two months later, that finding was suspended because Fiat said the problem was limited to 850 Spyders, which Fiat would recall and repair. Later, NHTSA found the problem extended to 124s. Moreover, it started receiving complaints that owners of Spiders were not receiving adequate prices for repurchased vehicles and in some instances owners were being pressured to sell back their cars instead of having parts replaced. In addition, NHTSA reinstated its initial finding of a safety-related defect in the 70-74 Fiat 124s. By October, 1979, NHTSA estimated that Fiat had sold more than 180,000 of the affected vehicles and over 100,000 were still on the road. The cars are now between nine and 13 years old.

By the time NHTSA had reached a final finding of defect—a position that automatically triggers mandatory recall and free repair—it knew that Fiat would go to court and so the Justice Department, on behalf of NHTSA, filed suit against Fiat. NHTSA was now not only asking for repair but insisting that if repurchase was agreed to, Fiat would have to offer owners the average of "blue" or "red" book values in the used-car guides.

The agreements reached with Fiat after strenuous litigation not only told Fiat to send warning letters to owners and to recall and repair but specified the amounts of money to be offered to owners and/or amounts of rebates toward purchase of newer Fiat vehicles. The first agreement occurred in July, 1981, and the second in December, 1981.

The third—a year later—deals with the relatively few 1970-74 Fiats still left on the road.

IVECO unaffected by Fiat withdrawal

BLUE HILL, Pa. — Fiat's plans to pull out of the U. S. car market will have no effect on the future of IVECO light trucks and Magirus medium trucks in this country, according to James R. Bostic, president, IVECO Trucks of North America, Inc.

Although Fiat is the parent of Netherlands-based IVECO B.C., of which ITONA is a subsidiary, there is no official connection between the two firms, Bostic said. ITONA is continuing plans to expand its product line in the U. S., he added.

Chevrolet is No. 1 for first time since '76

'82 truck sales gain 13.6 percent

Continued from Page 14

38.3 percent, from 73,921 units in 1981 to 45,642. Heavies were down 9.3 percent to 137,653 units, compared with the year-earlier 151,736.

In the final month of the year, an estimated 206,518 new trucks of all types were retailed in the U. S., an increase of 37.9 percent over the 149,800 units sold in December, 1981.

The Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Assn. reported that its members' retail outlets sold 2,247,045 new trucks in 1982, an increase of 13.9 percent over the previous year's 1,972,301 units.

In December, according to MVMA, domestic truck makers reported 176,517 retail sales, up 40.5 percent from the year-earlier 125,673 units.

On Jan. 1, the MVMA said, the number of unsold new trucks in retailers' hands totaled 559,366 units, an increase of 3.6 percent over the 539,755 in inventory on the first day of 1981.

Light-truck stocks at the start of the year totaled 503,410 units, up 1.3 percent from the year-earlier 497,017. Mediums were up 72.4 percent, from 10,577 on Jan. 1, 1981, to 18,234. Heavies totaled 37,722 units, 17.3 percent higher than the previous year's 32,161.

• Big Three truck manufacturers reported that their dealers retailed 2,075,231 new units in calendar 1982, an increase of 18.5 percent over the year-earlier 1,750,649.

December deliveries were 48.9 percent higher than those in 1981, soaring from 108,910 units to 162,175.

Chevrolet dealers sold 58,636 trucks in the final month of the year, up 38.5 percent from the previous year's 42,347. Ford's December sales totaled 65,747 units, a gain of 70.5 percent over the year-earlier 38,570.

Dodge and Plymouth dealers retailed 245,945 light trucks during the year, up 31.8 percent from the 186,849 sold in 1981. December sales were 29.5 percent higher, from 15,292 units in 1981 to 19,805.

GMC's 12-month total was 228,934 units, an increase of 33.4 percent over the previous year's 171,551. In December, dealers retailed 17,987 new trucks, 41.6 percent higher than the year-earlier 12,701 units.

Sales of four-wheel-drive Jeep vehicles were up for both the year and the month. The 12-month count of 63,761 units was eight-tenths of one percent higher than the year-earlier 63,275. In December, 5,392 units were sold, up 16.3 percent from the previous year's 4,636.

Volkswagen dealers sold 12,770 new compact pickups during the year, a decline of 62.3 units from the year-earlier 33,879. December sales were off 75.4 percent, from 2,833 in the final month of 1981 to 698 units.

During the year, Toyota sales totaled 144,308 units, an increase of 4.9 percent over the previous year's 137,529. December deliveries were 12.7 percent higher, from 11,624 units in 1981 to 13,096.

Datsun dealers retailed 107,927 new compacts in calendar 1982, a decline of 6.4 percent from the year-earlier 115,334. The December total, however, was up 2.3 percent to 10,600 units, compared with 10,424 in 1981.

Mazda sales were dramatically higher for both the year and the month. The 12-month count soared to 41,005 units, an increase of 144.1 percent over the year-earlier 16,798. In December, the total was 4,269, up 377 percent over the 895 units sold in the same month in 1981.

Isuzu dealers sold 17,669 compacts during the year, an increase of 77.4 percent over the previous year's 9,959 units. The December total was 18.8 percent higher than the year earlier, from 1,184 units in 1981 to 1,406.

Mitsubishi, which began distribution late in the year, said its dealers sold 570 units in December, bringing the 1982 total to 1,264 vehicles.

Big Three December, year-to-date truck sales

	December 1982	December 1981	Calendar Year 1982	Calendar Year 1981
Ford				
Vans	9,803	7,059	125,478	108,658
Club Wagon	3,734	1,731	33,668	24,669
Ranger	10,193	.....	104,396	.....
Courier	1,647	3,869	32,967	63,925
Bronco	4,174	2,863	41,228	35,680
Conventional Pickups	32,820	18,855	408,899	432,134
Mediums	NA	3,244	44,911	42,087
Heavies	NA	949		9,696
Chevrolet				
Vans	8,246	4,336	101,932	86,727
Sportvan	1,382	757	15,843	13,576
S-10	11,479	7,224	177,758	15,473
S-10 Blazer	3,831	.....	8,161	.....
LUV	819	1,696	22,304	61,724
El Camino	1,460	1,528	22,732	33,086
Blazer	1,697	1,341	24,103	21,399
Suburban	2,902	984	28,004	19,518
Conventional Pickups	25,966	23,672	393,277	403,487
Mediums	854	809	14,691	20,638
Chrysler				
Vans	4,253	4,032	60,780	49,639
Voyager	212	444	4,715	4,739
Ram Wagon	1,596	2,083	28,486	19,985
Scamp	355	.....	691	.....
Rampage	1,549	.....	17,067	.....
Arrow	358	546	5,392	8,728
Ram-50	2,877	1,907	34,614	25,174
Trail Duster	.....	49	244	1,624
Ramcharger	1,641	498	11,504	5,209
Conventional Pickups	7,014	5,733	82,452	71,523
GMC				
Vans	2,406	1,725	27,661	22,982
Caballero	186	194	2,573	3,994
S-15 Jimmy	638	.....	1,229	.....
S-15	3,174	1,305	39,358	2,314
Jimmy	471	312	6,574	4,689
Suburban	994	248	9,490	4,349
Conventional Pickups	8,340	6,626	109,762	97,599
P models	264	132	3,765	3,454
Mediums	1,106	1,299	20,123	20,347
Heavies	408	860	8,399	11,823

Fuel-system rule called effective for cost, safety

WASHINGTON. — A government evaluation of safety standard 301 (fuel system integrity) as upgraded in 1975 on orders from Congress shows it to be cost effective and successful in reducing the number of fires in highway accidents and lowering the number of fire-related deaths and related injuries.

The evaluation uses statistical analysis of crash fire data from five states, with most stress given to Michigan data. Cost estimates are from the manufacturers.

There are about 20,600 car crash fires a year, associated with 1,100 deaths, 3,200 serious injuries and more than 3,300 moderate to minor injuries, not counting occupants of any other vehicles.

The upgraded standard was found effective not only for post-crash fires but for post-crash fuel leakage. The drop in crash fire rates has meant: 400 fewer deaths, 520 fewer serious injuries, 110 fewer moderate injuries and 6,500 fewer car crash fires.

Total cost to meet the standard is estimated at $8.50 per car or a total of $85 million a year. These are preliminary findings.

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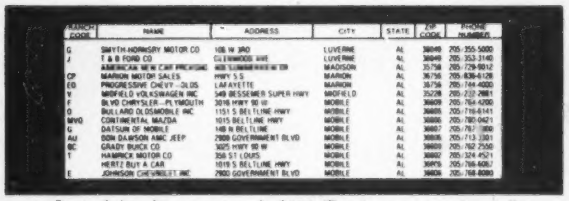

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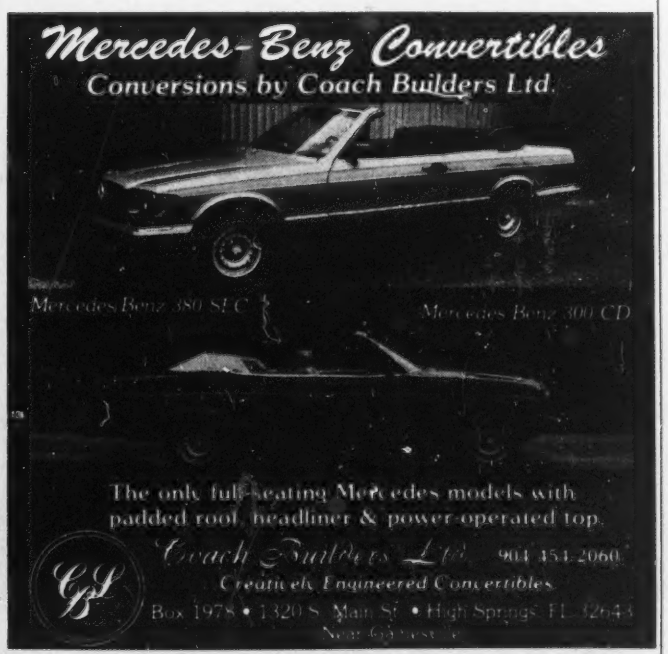

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Up 40 pct. from last year

Week's car output reaches 105,322

By Patricia Hoffman
Staff Writer

The domestic auto makers continued their early-1983 comeback last week. Production was up considerably from a week ago and a year ago.

Last week, the manufacturers estimated 105,322 cars, up 39.82 percent from the previous week's 75,328, and a 77.06 percent gain over last year's 59,485 units.

The cumulative two-week total for 1983 reached 180,650 units, 53.16 percent ahead of the 117,945 cars produced in the comparable 1982 period.

Breakdown for the year to date by company was: General Motors, 69.78 percent; Ford Motor, 16.99 percent; Chrysler Corp., 5.84 percent; American Motor's, 3.75 percent; Volkswagen of America, 3.53 percent and Honda, 0.11 percent.

Six assembly plants were idle last week, continuing downtime that began before the Christmas/New Year's holidays.

General Motors' Willow Run point, Ford Motor's Metuchen, San Jose and Wayne facilities and Chrysler Corp.'s Belvidere plant remained closed due to overstocked inventory.

The Ford Atlanta facility continued down last week for model changeover. Atlanta, which produces the LTD and Marquis, is currently retooling for the addition of the 1983 Thunderbird, which is slated to go into production later this month.

Back last week following inventory control were Ford's Dearborn, and Lorain facilities, Chrysler's Jefferson, Newark and St. Louis points, and American Motors' Kenosha plant.

Truck production jumps for week; 29,868 assembled

The return of five plants helped boost last week's domestic truck production substantially from the previous week's total, but the cumulative output so far this year lagged slightly behind the comparable 1982 period.

Last week, the makers estimated 29,868 units, a 50.67 percent gain from the previous week's 19,824, and up 6.52 percent from 28,041 built the same week last year.

During the first two weeks of assembly this year, the manufacturers produced 49,692 trucks, 2.19 percent behind the 50,804 units finished in the same period in 1982.

Eight assembly plants remained idle last week (Jan. 10) changeover. Ford Motor's Kansas City, Kentucky, Norfolk, San Jose and Twin Cities plants plus Chrysler Corp.'s Belvidere and Warren facilities, all idle since the holidays break, continued down last week due to overstocked inventory.

Closed for model changeover was Volkswagen of America's Westmoreland point. The plant, idle since June 28, is slated to return Feb. 7.

Back last week from inventory control down time were the full-size pickup lines at General Motors' Flint, Janesville, Pontiac and St. Louis facilities. Also back was American Motors' Toledo truck point.

Pontiac sales reorganized; six regions established

PONTIAC. — Pontiac has restructured its sales organization, adding four new regional offices and new executive appointments.

W. H. (Bill) Ross, former assistant general sales manager, became assistant general sales manager - administration, working directly with General Sales Manager William W. Lane on all administrative matters.

Pontiac's 26 zones were formed into six regions: Central, Southeast, Midwest and Southwest were added to the existing Northeast and Western regions.

The regions are served by an Assistant General Sales Manager-East and West, reporting directly to Lane. H. S. (Howard) Christie, formerly sales manager-Central, is the new assistant general sales manager-East. A Western manager has yet to be named.

Reporting to Christie are the Northeast region, under J. P. (Jim) LaClede, headquartered in New York; Central, under R. J. (Rich) Sherman, headquartered in Detroit, and Southeast, under J. W. (John) Johnston, headquartered in Atlanta.

The West area includes the Midwest region under J. L. (Jack) Losch, in Chicago; Southwest, under S. A. (Steve) Hoostal, in Dallas, and Western, under C. W. Thomson, in Los Angeles.

J. G. (John) Middlebrook, former director of car distribution, becomes general director of distribution, sales analysis and strategic planning.

R. L. (Bob) Brown is the new Cleveland zone manager; T. J. (Tim) Maloney is the New York zone manager. T. L. (Tom) King, Jr. is the Northwest zone manager.

R. T. (Dick) Hartzell becomes general service manager of the Service Department. Byron Strausser becomes assistant staff engineer / design evaluation.

AMC deal formed

THORNTON, Colo.—Sal Caeti and Gene Osborn have formed Osborn AMC/Jeep / Renault here.

Auto production in Canada continues big lead over 1982

The Canadian auto makers have built 2½ times as many cars thus far this year as they did in the comparable 1982 period.

The return of one Ford Motor car facility offset downtime at American Motors' Brampton plant last week, bringing the estimated output up to 17,502 units, a 21.58 percent gain from the previous week's build of 14,396. The total was up substantially from 8,594 units built in the year-ago week.

The auto makers have assembled 31,898 units so far this year, compared with 12,789 through Jan. 16, 1982.

Truck production last week was targeted at only 5,283 units, down 21.0 percent from the previous week's 6,687, and down 34.27 percent from 8,038 units built the same week last year. However, the year-to-date total of 11,970 units was up 9.54 percent from 10,928 built the first two weeks of 1982.

Ford's Oakville car point resumed operations last week (Jan. 10) after being idle since Dec. 20 for holiday downtime.

The Ford St. Thomas car plant and Oakville truck facility remained closed last week for inventory control. Oakville is slated to return today (Jan. 17) while St. Thomas will remain down until Jan. 24.

International Harvester's Chatham and Vancouver facilities remained closed last week to control inventory.

AMC's Brampton plant also was idle last week for inventory adjustment.

All other car and truck facilities were reported operating last week.

TRUCK PRODUCTION IN U. S.†

	Week Ended Jan. 15, 1983	Week Ended Jan. 16, 1982	Week Ended Jan. 8, 1983	Jan. to Date	Jan. 1 to Jan. 16, 1982	Jan. 1 to Jan. 15, 1983
CHEVROLET	12,919	12,012	8,277	21,196	26,208	21,196
DODGE	.....	3,215	.....	.....	3,700	.....
FORD	7,886	5,470	8,021	15,907	5,469	15,907
GMC	5,543	3,965	2,191	7,734	8,792	7,734
INTERNATIONAL	300*	1,029	285*	585*	2,285	585*
VOLKSWAGEN	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
JEEP	2,170	900*	.....	2,170	1,500*	2,170
AM GENERAL	50*	50*	50*	100*	50*	100*
MISCELLANEOUS	1,000*	1,400*	1,000*	2,000*	2,800*	2,000*
Total Trucks, U. S.	29,868	28,041	19,824	49,692	50,804	49,692

CANADIAN TRUCK PRODUCTION

	Week Ended Jan. 15, 1983	Week Ended Jan. 16, 1982	Week Ended Jan. 8, 1983	Jan. to Date	Jan. 1 to Jan. 16, 1982	Jan. 1 to Jan. 15, 1983
CHRYSLER CORP.	2,652	1,969	2,646	5,298	2,000	5,298
FORD MOTOR	219	351	280	499	738	499
GENERAL MOTORS	2,412	5,477	3,761	6,173	7,712	6,173
INTERNATIONAL	.....	241	.....	.....	478	.....
Total Trucks, Canada	5,283	8,038	6,687	11,970	10,928	11,970
N. American Trucks	35,151	36,079	26,511	61,662	61,732	61,662

†—Now includes window van production. *—Estimated.
Jeep includes commercial only. AM General includes government-destined vehicles.

U. S. CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended Jan. 15, 1983	Week Ended Jan. 16, 1982	Week Ended Jan. 8, 1983	Jan. to Date	Jan. 1 to Jan. 16, 1982	Jan. 1 to Jan. 15, 1983
AMERICAN MOTORS	3,800	1,600	2,974	6,774	2,550	6,774
AMC Total	800	.....	.....	800	.....	800
Spirit	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Concord	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Eagle	800	.....	.....	800	.....	800
Renault Total	3,000	.....	2,974	5,974	.....	5,974
Alliance	3,000	.....	2,974	5,974	.....	5,974
CHRYSLER CORP.	10,550	10,429	.....	10,550	10,400	10,550
Plymouth Total	3,450	3,500	.....	3,450	3,400	3,450
Horizon	.....	2,068	.....	.....	2,200	.....
Reliant	3,400	1,432	.....	3,400	1,200	3,400
Caravelle ('81)	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Caravelle ('83)	50	.....	.....	50	.....	50
Gran Fury	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Chrysler Total	2,900	3,007	.....	2,900	3,200	2,900
LeBaron	1,900	3,007	.....	1,900	3,200	1,900
Chrysler	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Chrysler E-Class	1,000	.....	.....	1,000	.....	1,000
Dodge Total	4,200	3,922	.....	4,200	3,800	4,200
Omni	.....	1,843	.....	.....	1,900	.....
Aries	2,700	1,109	.....	2,700	1,000	2,700
Diplomat	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Dodge 400	600	970	.....	600	900	600
Dodge 600	900	.....	.....	900	.....	900
St. Regis	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
FORD MOTOR	17,768	2,807	12,918	30,686	4,256	30,686
Ford Division	10,385	.....	6,875	17,260	.....	17,260
Escort	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Fairmont	2,950	.....	3,017	5,967	.....	5,967
Mustang	3,168	.....	.....	3,168	.....	3,168
LTD/Granada	2,989	.....	3,149	6,138	.....	6,138
Thunderbird	488	.....	.....	488	.....	488
Crown Victoria/Ford	790	.....	709	1,499	.....	1,499
EXP	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
L-M Division	7,383	2,807	6,043	13,426	4,256	13,426
Mercury Total	5,325	1,310	3,981	9,306	1,293	9,306
Lynx	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Capri	670	.....	.....	670	.....	670
Zephyr	906	.....	863	1,769	.....	1,769
Marquis/Cougar	1,027	.....	883	1,910	.....	1,910
Cougar/XR7	244	.....	.....	244	.....	244
Gr. Marquis/Marquis LN7	2,478	1,310	2,235	4,713	1,293	4,713
Lincoln Total	2,058	1,497	2,062	4,120	2,963	4,120
Continental ('82)	412	380	412	824	1,121	824
Lincoln	964	614	968	1,932	980	1,932
Mark VI	682	503	682	1,364	862	1,364
GENERAL MOTORS	69,854	44,649	56,198	126,052	100,739	126,052
Buick Division	14,281	11,810	14,934	29,215	21,107	29,215
Skylark	290	1,636	.....	290	3,221	290
Skyhawk J	1,575	575	1,583	3,158	496	3,158
Century	2,710	813	2,740	5,450	5,097	5,450
Regal	4,992	4,335	5,914	10,906	4,329	10,906
Buick	3,951	3,290	3,978	7,929	6,704	7,929
Riviera	763	1,161	719	1,482	1,260	1,482
Cadillac Division	6,617	4,691	6,545	13,162	8,905	13,162
Cimarron	500	.....	591	1,091	154	1,091
Seville	560	371	527	1,087	320	1,087
Eldorado	1,597	1,080	1,509	3,106	1,235	3,106
Cadillac	3,960	3,240	3,918	7,878	7,196	7,878
Chevrolet Division	24,636	12,539	14,255	38,891	30,047	38,891
Chevette	4,550	.....	.....	4,550	.....	4,550
Cavalier	3,025	4,462	2,902	5,927	10,545	5,927
Celebrity	2,065	.....	1,445	3,510	2,196	3,510
Camaro	3,945	3,219	3,853	7,798	6,768	7,798
Citation	2,595	2,197	1,164	3,759	4,355	3,759
Malibu	2,467	861	2,480	4,947	2,194	4,947
Monte Carlo	1,161	922	1,802	2,963	2,166	2,963
Chevrolet	4,774	316	603	5,377	639	5,377
Corvette	54	562	6	60	1,184	60
Oldsmobile Division	17,615	9,576	15,327	32,942	27,168	32,942
Omega	.....	2,280	.....	.....	4,864	.....
Firenza	595	589	607	1,202	496	1,202
Cutlass	6,060	.....	4,840	10,900	4,826	10,900
Cutlass/Ciera	2,440	650	2,462	4,902	5,535	4,902
Oldsmobile	7,720	5,371	6,658	14,378	10,692	14,378
Toronado	800	686	760	1,560	755	1,560
Pontiac Division	6,705	6,033	5,137	11,842	13,512	11,842
Acadian†	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
2000	1,595	648	1,496	3,091	1,972	3,091
1000	1,050	.....	.....	1,050	.....	1,050
Firebird	1,585	1,544	1,594	3,179	3,506	3,179
Phoenix	715	803	.....	715	1,417	715
G. Prix/B'ville ('83)	1,760	3,038	2,047	3,807	6,617	3,807
A6000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
LeMans	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Pontiac	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
HONDA*	100*	.....	100*	200*	.....	200*
VOLKSWAGEN	3,250	.....	3,138	6,388	.....	6,388
CHECKER	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Total Cars, U. S.	105,322	59,485	75,328	180,650	117,945	180,650

CANADIAN CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended Jan. 15, 1983	Week Ended Jan. 16, 1982	Week Ended Jan. 8, 1983	Jan. to Date	Jan. 1 to Jan. 16, 1982	Jan. 1 to Jan. 15, 1983
AMERICAN MOTORS	743	254	1,220	1,963	257	1,963
CHRYSLER CORP.	4,128	3,282	4,272	8,400	6,514	8,400
FORD MOTOR	3,766	240	313	4,079	768	4,079
GENERAL MOTORS	8,640	4,594	8,366	17,006	4,800	17,006
VOLVO	225	224	225	450	450	450
Total Cars, Canada	17,502	8,594	14,396	31,898	12,789	31,898
N. American Cars	122,824	68,079	89,724	212,548	130,734	212,548
N. American Trucks	35,151	36,079	26,511	61,662	61,732	61,662
North American Cars and Trucks	157,975	104,158	116,235	274,210	192,466	274,210

†—All Acadians and Caravelles are built for sale in Canada. *—Estimated.
*—Honda figures are estimated. Actual Honda production totals will be released next Spring.

C2700-1 1/25/83

Automotive News

January 24, 1983

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58th year—$40 per year, $1.00 per copy

380,000 units good for 54 days

Import stocks edge higher

By Richard A. Wright
Assistant Managing Editor

The inventory of new imported cars in the U. S. climbed moderately during December and the industry opened the new year with a 54-day supply, up from 51 days a month earlier, but still on the lean side.

The inventory of new imported cars Jan. 1 totaled 380,316, compared with 365,467 a month earlier.

Despite the increase, a number of nameplates remained in very short supply, several of them shorter than a month earlier.

The inventory of new imported pickup trucks was also up a bit to a 78½-day stockpile Jan. 1, compared with a 75-day supply Dec. 1. The unit count of trucks in stock was 107,535, which was actually down from the month-earlier total of 117,184.

The combined imported car and truck inventory Jan. 1 totaled 487,851 units, a 58-day supply, compared with 491,959 units Dec. 1, a 55-day stock.

The increase in imported-car stocks during December was entirely accounted for by Japanese makes, which jumped from 261,874 units, a 43½-day supply Dec. 1, to 274,372 units Jan. 1, a 48-day stockpile.

But despite the Japanese buildup, shortages persisted in some lines. Shortest were Honda, 24 days, and Toyota, 28 days.

Other Japanese lines and their Jan. 1 days-supply figures were: Subaru, 58; Mazda, 60; Nissan, 68; Isuzu, 114, and Mitsubishi, 167. In addition, Chrysler Corp. had an 87-day supply of Mitsubishi-built cars, including Plymouth Colt, 84; Dodge Colt, 87; Sapporo, 70, and Challenger, 120.

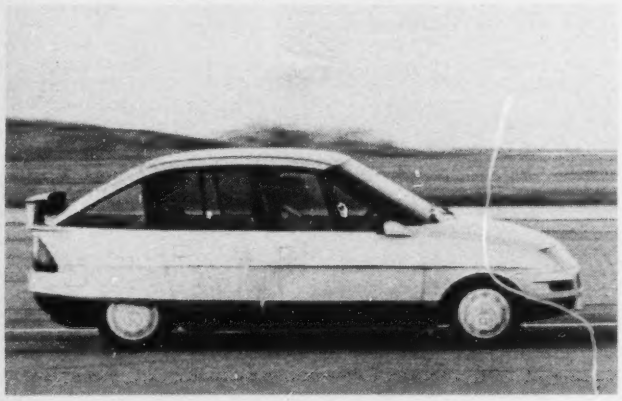
The stockpile of West German-built new cars Jan. 1 totaled 65,129 units, a 68-day supply, down from 71,850 Dec. 1, an 85-day supply.

Mercedes-Benz had the leanest inventory of any import at 21 days, while Porsche at 30 days and BMW at 32 days were also very short. Volkswagen had a 142-day supply of German-built VWs, along with an 87-day stock of U. S.-built Rabbits and a 112-day supply of Audis.

Days-supply figures for other European lines Jan. 1 included Jaguar, 42½; Volvo, 69; Saab, 80; Peugeot, 106; Alfa Romeo, 111; Renault, 185, and Fiat-Lancia, 185.

Days-supply figures for new imported pickup trucks in inventory Jan. 1 were: Toyota, 49; Nissan, 52; Mazda, 70; Chrysler Corp. Ram 50 and Arrow, 71; Mitsubishi, 153; Ford Courier, 206; Isuzu, 262, and Chevrolet LUV, 340.

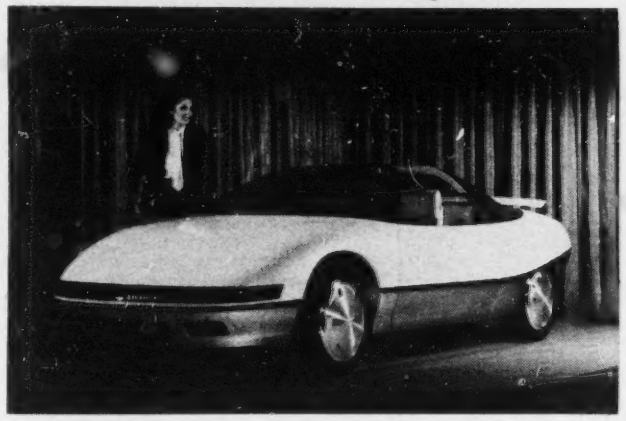
Slippery and plastic



BL's third-generation fuel miser

BL has developed the ECV 3, its third-generation Energy Conservation Vehicle, built with an aluminum structure and plastic body panels and fitted with a lightweight alloy three-cylinder engine. Combined with a drag coefficient of 0.25, the 1,464-pound car is said to get 40.8 MPG in the ECE urban test cycle. Story on Page 13.

The concept is computers



Buick Questor strong on electronics

Buick unveiled its 14-computer concept car, the Questor, at the Detroit Auto Show. A laser key replaces door handles. A hand-held control box opens the door, raises the car for easy entry and adjusts seats, pedals and stereo to each driver's setting. Rear-view mirrors are replaced with television monitors. A computer raises the flush rear spoiler and the rear end as the car accelerates, to reduce wind drag. Story on Page 3.

Chrysler chops prices on line of convertibles

Chrysler Corp. last week reduced convertible prices $995 to $2,505 and now offers a ragtop with a sticker of $9,995.

That model is the Dodge 400, which was cut from $12,500. Some $520 worth of equipment was removed from the car — power steering, wheel covers and steel-belted-radial whitewall tires.

Tom Pappert, Chrysler vice president, U. S. automotive sales, said the company is "passing along the efficiencies we achieved by manufacturing our convertibles in-house at one of our plants."

Chrysler now makes its convertibles at its St. Louis assembly plant. When the soft tops were introduced last year, the conversion was done by Cars & Concepts, Brighton, Mich. Conversion work on other domestic convertibles (Ford Mustang and Buick Riviera) is handled by outside firms.

There were no equipment deletions on Chrysler's other three convertibles. The LeBaron dropped to $10,995 from $12,800, a cut of $1,805.

The LeBaron Mark Cross now is $14,595, down $1,000. The new Town and Country is $15,595, down $995. The Town and Country convertible has all the Mark Cross equipment plus a simulated wood-grain exterior and a deck-lid luggage rack.

On models in inventory, dealers will be compensated for the difference between the old and the new wholesale prices. Dealers will receive revised price stickers and must display both the old and the new stickers on the cars.

Chrysler is giving purchasers of '82 convertibles a $300 rebate certificate. This applies to cars in dealers' hands as of Jan. 17, 1983.

Market share is reduced, too

Diesel-car sales plunge 37.6 pct.

By Jim Plegue
Staff Writer

Sales of diesel-powered passenger cars plummeted 37.6 percent during calendar year 1982 while market penetration skidded to below 4 percent of total industry sales.

Domestic and import manufacturers sold 318,648 diesel cars during 1982, a substantial drop from the 510,679 sales of calendar 1981.

Likewise, diesel market share took a beating last year. Diesel sales accounted for only 3.99 percent of total domestic and import deliveries during '82, down from a 5.99-percent diesel share in 1981.

Diesel sales had been one of the few bright spots in the otherwise discouraging sales year of 1981. Both the calendar-year diesel total and the 536,440 diesel sales of model-year 1981 established records.

But the boom became a bust shortly after the '81 model year ended as consumers reacted swiftly to stable or falling gasoline prices, steady gasoline supply and the higher price tags put on diesel-engine options. Diesel sales have been flat ever since.

Most of the smaller manufacturers, however, posted diesel sales gains during '82, while giants General Motors and Volkswagen saw shrinking volumes and market share throughout the year.

GM's sales of 173,944 diesel cars during 1982 represented a 42.96-percent dip from the 304,960 sold during 1981. GM still accounts for more than half of the diesel market in the U. S., but the company lost 5.12-percentage points last year—from 59.71 percent in 1981 to 54.59 percent in 1982.

All GM divisions except Chevrolet registered sales losses during 1982. Chevrolet diesel sales increased 73.82 percent during 1982, bolstered by strong sales of diesel-powered Chevette (17,102 units) and Impala/Caprice (18,868). Chevy's share of the diesel market almost tripled last year—from 5.40 percent in '81 to 15.06 percent last year.

• Volkswagen reported whopping losses in both volume and market share. The company sold 48,091 diesel cars during 1982, down 59.44 percent from 118,585 in 1981. VW's diesel share dropped 8.13 percentage points to 15.09 percent.

Sales of VW's bread-and-butter diesel model, the Rabbit, plunged 62.03 percent last year. The company sold 37,705 diesel Rabbits during 1982, down from 99,308 during '81.

Audi's lineup of higher-priced luxury diesel cars fared better.

Continued on Page 60, Col. 2

breaking news

Chrysler to drop push-pull

HIGHLAND PARK, Mich. — John Naughton, Chrysler Corp. executive vice president of sales and marketing, wired dealers last week, officially promising to eliminate push-pull "from all future programs." He acknowledged that the company had had "five consecutive quarters" of push-pull, but said Chrysler's position had improved to where it no longer needed them. There are reports of February overtime at several plants and the E-class cars being put on allocation because of demand.

Hyundai to enter Canadian market

TORONTO.—Hyundai Motor Co. of Seoul, Republic of Korea, will enter the Canadian market this summer with its Pony four-door hatchback model, a rear-drive subcompact with 1,439-cc engine. The company, which will probably be

See BREAKING NEWS, Page 8, Col. 1

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Fewer but more-distinct models, and lots of electronics

Reuss maps new strategy at Buick

By Kathleen Hamilton
Financial Editor

General Motors divisions will begin to differentiate while they lop off overlapping car lines, Buick General Manager Lloyd E. Reuss said.

One way Buick is planning to distinguish itself from its sister divisions is through widespread use of electronics, both in its products and in its operations.

The division has already begun the move into computerization in an attempt to provide customers with an unusual degree of service, according to Reuss.

But Buick products will be looking unique, too — especially front ends, he said.

Like many of its sister divisions, Buick is studying the profit possibilities of producing cars it can call its own — part of a decentralizing trend at GM, Reuss told the Detroit Auto Writers Group.

But, he also pointed out that the fate of a luxury two-seater hinges on corporate cash flow. It is now in clay form, unapproved as yet for production. In the best-case scenario, it could be in production in 1986, Reuss said.

• Reuss cited the Riviera convertible and T-Type as other examples of the path toward distinctiveness Buick is following.

Other "discriminators" Buick will be trying: Fuel injection (for both Regal and Riviera in '84), turbocharging and diesels.

Buick held back on advertising the diesel and the turbocharger for two years, "trying to get the turbo a hot car. Now it is," Reuss said.

The result is steady diesel sales and a marked increase in orders for the turbocharged Regal -- more for the first four months of 1983 than Buick had expected for the year, he said.

Other models will be turbocharged in 1984. A 3.8-liter turbocharged engine will bow then. Another lightweight 3.0-liter plant is due in '85.

Reuss said the downsized Electra for 1984 will have a distinctive Buick face, seat six passengers and weigh less than its predecessor. He predicted its sales will double those of the current model.

In 1987, the division will be producing only front-drive cars and will have a thinner lineup, eliminating the overlap between Century and Regal and between Skylark and Century, Reuss said.

Although Buick has trimmed back its forecast for 1983 model year sales (from 850,000 to 820,000), Reuss was bullish on the division's medium-range prospects. One reason is that the baby boomers are aging, and their children soon won't fit in the back seats of subcompacts. These families will soon become potential Buick customers.

Per capita income is also on the rise. The closing of the fuel-economy gap between small and large cars is yet another bonus for Buick, according to Reuss.

• Buick's new customer satisfaction advances also promise to boost the division's sales.

A toll-free customer service number for technical assistance, tied to the division's data base in Flint, promises to dramatically increase the number of repeat customers: Reuss said in non-automotive markets, a similar service has increased repeat customers as much as 2½ times.

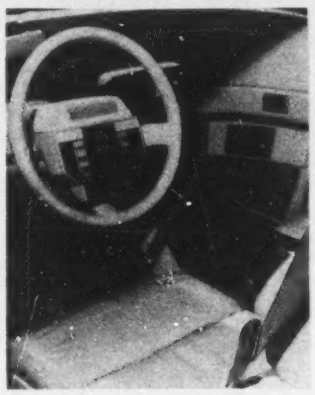
Buick now provides such technical assistance to 60,000 customers a year; Reuss said the computerized system with 40 stations that is being installed this year will allow 150,000 contacts a year.

In another move into the computer age, Buick has already tied two-thirds of its zones into a similar technical assistance service. The rest will be tied in by the end of February, he said.

In a year-long pilot program, Buick found it could answer 85

Continued on Page 60, Col. 1

Continued on Page 60, Col. 4



No more stalks

Transmission selector, turn signal switches, windshield wipers, washers and horn are in the center of the Questor's steering wheel. So is a voice-actuated radiotelephone and traction monitor.

No more navigators

The center console shows the driver where the car is on a map of the state, area or city. Below, a screen gives data on radio station, climate control, elapsed time, date, MPG, average speed, fuel remaining, estimated time of arrival and hotel reservations. A printer provides a hard copy.

Checker Motors sells taxi unit to former employe

WASHINGTON. — Checker Motors Corp. has sold its Yellow Cab Co. of Pittsburgh subsidiary to a longtime Yellow Cab executive for $290,000.

In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Checker reported the subsidiary has been sold to Alfred L. Krupp, who has been treasurer of Yellow Cab for 17 years. Krupp has been associated with Checker 31 years, a company spokeswoman said.

Checker received $100,000 and a promissory note for $190,000, according to SEC papers. In addition, Yellow Cab will lease two parcels in Pittsburgh owned by another Checker subsidiary.

Checker built taxicabs until last year and owned a number of taxicab firms. Its Kalamazoo (Mich.) plant now builds steel parts for other auto makers. Its last taxi company is Yellow Cab of Chicago.

Dodge undercuts import rivals with $5,665 truck

DETROIT.—In pricing its '83 imported trucks, Dodge went for a lowest-price-in-industry strategy with its base Ram 50.

At $5,665, the base Ram is below Mitsubishi's $5,749 model, the former price leader. The Ram unit is down $450 from its 1982 tag of $6,199. The Mitsubishi model is the one sold by Mitsubishi Motor Sales of America. Dodge Ram 50 trucks also are imported from Mitsubishi.

The Ram 50 Custom is $6,266, down from $6,408, and the Ram 50 Royal, at $7,135, is up from $6,892. The Ram 50 Sport, at $7,-732 is up from $7,474.

The Power Ram 4x4 Custom, at $8,424, is up from $8,361. The Power Ram Royal, at $9,565, is a new entry, and the Power Ram Sport, at $9,333, is up from $9,245.

VW offering rebates, aid on floorplanning

By Joseph Bohn
Marketing Editor

TROY, Mich. — Volkswagen has opted for consumer rebates, dealer floorplanning assistance and sharply higher promotional emphasis — particularly on several turbo diesel and special spring models—for its winter/spring marketing drive.

Meanwhile, officials flatly denied published reports of a possible low-interest-rate finance program on '83 models, and said they were sticking to policy in signing up new dealers.

Volkswagen, a reluctant rebater, nonetheless turned to costly "consumer benefits," as James R. Fuller, vice president of Volkswagen Division, termed them, to solve a short-term inventory problem on '82s.

The Jan. 11-April 30 program covers '82 imports and selected '82 domestic Rabbits. Announced retroactively last weekend, on imports it pays: $1,000 on Rabbit convertible; $700 on Jetta diesel; $1,200 on Vanagon diesel; $1,600 on Camper diesel; $1,000 on Quantum coupe and station wagon; $1,200 on Scirocco; $500 on Jetta gasoline engine model; $1,000 on Vanagon gasoline engine model; $1,000 on Camper gasoline engine model and $1,000 on Quantum sedan.

Also, on domestic models, it pays $525 on Rabbit diesels and $645 on diesel pickups. In essence, this is tantamount to offering the diesel engine option for free.

Fuller said it is "not our style" to overbuild cars, then incentivize them to sell off the inventory. However, because of leadtimes "here and in Germany" VW had not been able to adjust production fast enough to counter dropping demand in the small-car and diesel-engine market segments.

• To assist its "dealer partners," VW is paying 50 percent of dealers' wholesale floorplan expenditures "within our regions" on '82 import units purchased between Jan. 11 and April 30. It will pay the cost for a maximum of 180 days.

Although VW lost about 70 dealers within the past year, it has not loosened its basic policy of not signing up dual dealers in major metro areas.

"You don't make long-term decisions, like dealer representation, based upon a year or two of bad sales," Fuller said. "Once you make a change (in dealer representation) that's the bed you sleep in for the rest of your life."

About one-third of VW's dealers are exclusives, and they sell more than 50 percent of its volume, making the ratio of exclusives "important to us," Fuller said.

Despite its sales falloff, he added, dealers are still making good money servicing the sizeable VW owner body.

For the 1983 calendar year,

index

Advertising news	17
Auction reports	50
Automotive World News	35
Classified advertising	52
Editorial page	24
Personnel	58
Production by makes	62
Registrations, truck	48
Truck highlights	16

58th year — No. 4951

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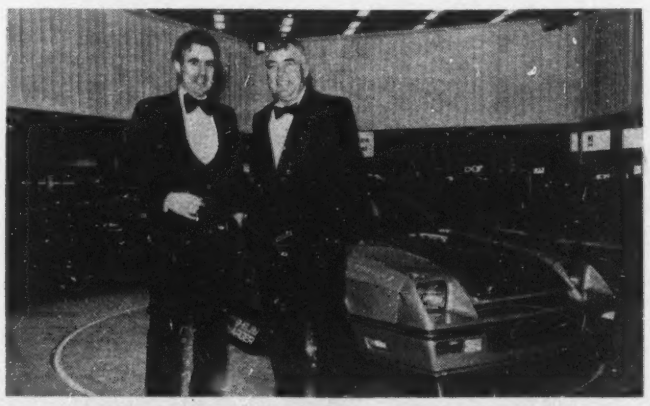

The right stuff

At Detroit Auto Show, Chrysler Corp. Vice Chairman Gerald Greenwald and Carroll Shelby are all smiles after checking out the high-performance Shelby Charger in the Chrysler exhibit.

3 GM units to sponsor new grid league on TV

By Joseph Bohn
Marketing Editor

DETROIT. — Buick, Chevrolet truck and GMAC have signed on as sponsors in the new United States Football League (USFL), with a couple more automotive participants to be added.

Datsun, Chevy truck and Buick got first crack at sponsoring the new football league's games on TV, beginning March 6, but Datsun declined. All three are Monday Night Football sponsors.

Datsun's decision opened the door to other participants.

Chevrolet truck and Buick each have about three minutes of TV time per game on 10 of the 20 regular season games, plus 1½ minutes apiece on the championship playoff, July 17.

At $30,000 per 30 seconds, they are investing something over $2 million each. GMAC has an undisclosed number of minutes per game on every game in the season. Playoff games go for over $30,000.

ABC is still talking to other automotive companies and is expected to add a couple of car divisions on alternate weeks when Buick and Chevy truck aren't in.

It's also expected that auto component supplier divisions, such as at GM, for example, will get into the games.

The new football league holds a certain amount of risk, but also a lot of attraction for car companies because of the high concentration of anticipated male viewership.

It's uncertain yet how strong the ratings for spring/summer football games will be. But generally if the games don't deliver the expected audiences, the network is expected to make it up to sponsors with extra time elsewhere in its TV scheduling.

A number of Detroit car companies have expressed interest in the new league, and it is anticipated that the remaining available time will be sold on a sponsorship, rather than participation or scatter buy, basis.

Boston Subaru opens

BOSTON. — Boston Subaru has opened here.